

# SD Voyager

## Meet Mike Garcia of Pillbox Tavern in Solana Beach



Today we'd like to introduce you to Mike Garcia.

**Thanks for sharing your story with us Mike. So, let's start at the beginning and we can move on from there.**

I started working in the hospitality industry over 20 years and fell in love with it then. I bartended all over San Diego including Moondoggies in La Jolla and Pacific Beach, Side Bar in downtown and Sandbar in Mission Beach, just to name a few.

A little over five years ago, I opened Saddle Bar in Solana Beach with some partners, then opened Pillbox Tavern Solana Beach three years later. In the next few weeks, Leigh Gibson, Ryan Jones, Chef Shelly and myself, are opening Nautilus Tavern in La Jolla.

**Great, so let's dig a little deeper into the story – has it been an easy path overall and if not, what were the challenges you've had to overcome?**

It's never a smooth road opening up new locations and new ventures. Working with the right partners and staff help eliminate some of them. Seeing the end results always make the challenges well worth it.

**Pillbox Tavern – what should we know? What do you guys do best? What sets you apart from the competition?**

Each location and venue is unique. Saddle Bar has become a destination for live music and DJs in North County. Pillbox has become a “local” favorite for creative drinks and fresh cuisine. We’ve made it a family friendly environment for all ages, which I feel helps to draw in that local crowd to embrace it... We hope to bring that same “local vibe” to the Windansea neighborhood with the soon to come Nautilus Tavern.

**What moment in your career do you look back most fondly on?**

You can’t beat the feeling of opening a successful venture, watching it continually grow and change with the crowd is such a good feeling.

**Pricing:**

- Specialty cocktails – \$9-\$13 range
- Wings – 5 piece for \$7.50 or 10 pieces for \$14
- Entrees – \$11-\$15 range

**Contact Info:**

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- **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/PillboxTavern/](http://www.facebook.com/PillboxTavern/)
- **Twitter:** [twitter.com/PillboxTavern](http://twitter.com/PillboxTavern)
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